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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: NORTH KOREA, TAIWAN'S NAME CHANGE CAMPAIGN

**¶11.** Summary: With the week-long Lunar New Year holidays coming to an end, Taiwan's major Chinese-language dailies continued to focus their coverage February 24-26 on possible candidates vying for the 2008 presidential elections, and on the upcoming sixtieth anniversary of the 2-28 Incident. In terms of editorials and commentaries, a column in the pro-status quo "China Times" commented on North Korea. The article speculated that Washington and Pyongyang are secretly discussing plans to establish diplomatic ties. An editorial in the limited-circulation, conservative, pro-unification, English-language "China Post," on the other hand, criticized the DPP government's name change campaign, saying the move may not do any good for Taiwan. End summary.

#### **¶12.** North Korea

"Are the United States and North Korea Secretly Discussing Establishment of Diplomatic Ties?"

The "International Outlook" column in the pro-status quo "China Times" [circulation: 400,000] wrote (2/26):

"... Pyongyang is indeed changing its attitude. Kim Jong Il said this year will be North Korea's year for developing its economy. [Should this be true,] the country will then have to achieve some breakthroughs in its foreign relations. [For Pyongyang,] as long as it sticks to its position with regard to the stored nuclear weapons, it seems viable to freeze or demolish nuclear facilities in exchange for economic benefits. As for the United States, it will be basically acceptable as long as it is able to get Pyongyang to keep only a minimum of non-threat nuclear weapons and stop nuclear proliferation on the Korean Peninsula. As it stands now, it seems certain that the two countries will have to normalize their relations. If the North Korean nuclear issue can be resolved this way, it will not be as difficult as people have imagined for Washington and Pyongyang to establish diplomatic ties."

#### **¶13.** Taiwan's Name Change Campaign

"Re-naming Doesn't Pay"

The conservative, pro-unification, English-language "China Post" [circulation: 30,000] editorialized (2/24):

"On the surface, President Chen Shui-bian's re-naming of state-owned enterprises to drop 'China' or 'Chinese' in favor of 'Taiwan' or 'Taiwanese' is a step benefiting his cause for Taiwan independence. In reality, however, the move may not work to his advantage. First of all, Washington is not amused. U.S. State Department Spokesman Sean McCormack has stated bluntly that 'the United States does not support changes in terminology for entities administered by Taiwan authorities.' Perhaps more seriously, he warned that 'President Chen's fulfillment of his commitments will be a test of leadership, dependability and statesmanship, as well as his ability to protect

Taiwan's interests, its relations with others, and to maintain peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait.' There are harsh words. The name change, while giving Taiwan a separate identity, is in fact admitting that Taiwan is a part of China, a claim by the Beijing regime from the beginning. ...."

YOUNG